DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 090 166 SP 007 892

AUTHOR Patrick, Nettie
TITLE Placement of the Minority Teacher.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 4p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Employment Services; *Job Placement; *Minority Groups; *Minority Group Teachers; Problems

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the University of Minnesota placement office is to provide services and facilities for the mutual benefit of its students and employment recruiters. On April 17, 1972, "Policy and Procedures for University Placement Offices" was adopted by the university to protect the students against discriminatory practices. A provision was made for a campus committee to hear complaints against employers. The university can deny the use of employment services to those employers found guilty or not complying with the policy. A problem confronting the placement office is specific requests for minorities as employees, which can result in discriminatory charges and token employment. In conclusion, it is the obligation of the school placement director or employment official in public and private institutions to see that ethnic groups are given fair employment opportunities. (PD)

ED 090166

WORKSHOP IV

PLACEMENT OF THE MINORITY TEACHER

RESOURCE PERSON: Nettie Patrick
Education Career Development Office
Placement Section
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

The placement offices at the University of Minnesota came into existence because the University felt that its first obligation was to its students. In order to effectively assist the student in his search for employment, placement facilities and services were provided and made available to all qualified University of Minnesota students. It is for this sole purpose that the University of Minnesota maintains placement services for the mutual benefit of its students and employment recruiters.

To discourage discriminatory practices by employment recruiters, and to provide an avenue for legitimate complaints, the University of Minnesota adopted on April 17, 1972 a Policy and Procedures for University Placement Offices. Under this policy, guidelines governing "fair employment" were established to protect the student. It allowed a student, in the event that discriminatory practices were engaged in by an employer, to bring the case or complaint before a Campus Committee for hearing. Once a decision had been reached by the committee that an employer had not fully complied with the Policy, the University of Minnesota has the right to deny the use of placement facilities to that employer and his representatives for a full calendar year commencing on the date of the hearing.

Placement offices are often targets for disgruntled candidates seeking employment on the often referred to "tight market." The placement offices, therefore, are faced with a complexity of problems and issues regarding the placement or referral of all potential teacher candidates. I will focus my comments today on some of the problems confronting our placement office in our efforts to place or refer the minority teacher-administrator candidate.

SP 007 892

During the past three years some charges, complaints, and even threats of lawsuits have been directed to our placement office. The complaints usually concern stated preferences for candidates of a specific race or ethnic group. Directly or indirectly, the charges are usually initiated after receiving weekly published vacancy bulletins--the means which our office employs to notify candidates of available positions. These bulletins include a job description, position requirements, and location. Under requirements are listed any special preferences or qualifications which the candidate must possess in order to be considered for a particular position. (We do not identify sex, religion or age.) Very often, especially during the past three years, a very large number of vacancies indicate a preference for a minority and on occasion they specify the ethnic group they prefer. We have included ethnic identification to encourage the application of candidates who would benefit from affirmative action employment procedures. This has caused us trouble and we may find ourselves required to refuse service to employers who specify ethnic preferences. Requests of this type are not limited to a particular geographic location, but come from widely separated sections of the country including the Twin City school districts (both urban and suburban), California, including a school district in San Diego which for the past two years has recruited only the minority teacher on our campus, with particular preference for the black candidate and the Spanish speaking bi-lingual candidate. Candidates who signed on those schedules were thoroughly screened to ascertain that only those ethnic groups were available for interview upon the recruiter's arrival on our campus. We also receive requests from many other sections of the country including border-line states and the Deep South. These requests cover positions ranging from elementary teachers to college or university presidents. They include requests from employing officials from both predominantly black and predominantly white colleges and universities as well as from school districts with predominantly black student populations and those with predominantly white student populations.

It seems to me that requests for the minority teacher reached a peak during the past three years due to the intervention of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Washington, D.C. as well as by the organization of Affirmative Action Programs, and directives to school districts to equalize, by ethnic enrollments in a particular school building, the hiring of minority teachers until an approved balance was reached.

Actions directed by some of the State and Federal laws were accepted enthusiastically by some minorities and with distrust by still a larger number. Since "fair employment" is still in an embryonic stage, there is little doubt that a large majority of the minority group feel that their feelings of distrust of the effectiveness of Federal and State laws were well founded.

Robert Clayton, Placement Director of Spellman College, Atlanta, Georgia, in his address to a Small College Group at the ASCUS Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1971, made a desperate attempt to acquaint placement personnel on the national level with the conditions which exist with relation to employment of the black teacher. Mr. Clayton presented information which was alarming in regard to "tokenism" in placing black teachers -- a practice which is met negatively by many placement directors, but embraced by a still larger number. Mr. Clayton, supported by Ben T. Davis, an ASCUS Board member and, until a few weeks ago, Director of Placement at Alabama A & M College at Normal, Alabama, made an appeal to placement directors and school administrators to assist in eliminating the practice of "token" placements, but rather to adhere to the practice of making referrals of potential teacher candidates on the basis of training and experience.

In order to further protect exploitation of the black teacher, 90 affiliated black colleges and universities have united to form the Southern Education Program. This is a non-profit, foundation-supported organization, established in 1964 to strengthen facilities for black colleges and to identify and place dedicated black teachers in complementary teaching environments. This was another step in the right direction to assist in eliminating the practice of "tokenism" placement. I understand that other minority groups are also presently concerned with plans to assure members of their particular groups of the opportunity for equal consideration on the basis of training and experience rather than their particular ethnic background or origin.

In summary, during my 17½ years of involvement as a staff member in the University of Minnesota placement office, I have witnessed many changes in the employment pattern used by placement people as well as employing officials, especially with relation to minorities. At this time, I have both positive and negative impressions concerning so-called "fair employment practices". Placement officials as well as employing officials may, with discretion, use "undercover methods" to avoid compliance with directives outlined by State and Federal laws governing "fair employment". Such devices as codes, known only among shop keepers, are often used with good results in identifying or bringing into focus the ethnic group identification for either negative or positive reasons. There is no way to positively assure ethnic groups that they will be given fair employment opportunities. It is, therefore, my opinion that the obligation and responsibilities of honest fair employment rests entirely on the shoulders of the placement director or administrative officers in higher education, and the school personnel director or employing officials in public and private institutions.

I further feel that legislation now in existence, or any future legislation can only be as effective as the people at the helm of placement offices and employing institutions are honest and unbiased in their considerations and referrals of qualified candidates, whether it be for an unspecified candidate or for a position which requires, due to particular circumstances, a member of a particular ethnic group whose qualifications cannot be met by any other group. I further feel that if dedicated people, in both placement and employing institutions will work together to assure that representation and fair employment attitudes are employed both jointly and individually, great strides will be made to assure equal employment considerations for all ethnic groups.